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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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22827	7590	07/11/2005	EXAMINER	
DORITY & MANNING, P.A. POST OFFICE BOX 1449 GREENVILLE, SC 29602-1449			CRAIG, PAULA L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3761	
DATE MAILED: 07/11/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/732,907

Applicant(s)

WHEELER ET AL.

Examiner

Paula L. Craig

Art Unit

3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 December 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/25/04, 7/19/04, 12/27/2004, 4/11/2005
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Claim 16 requires that the pattern of hook material on the garment facing side of the absorbent article be different from the pattern of hook material on the wing structure. All of the embodiments shown in the figures show similar patterns of hook material on the garment facing sides of the absorbent article and wing structure (see specification, Figs. 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8). Therefore, this feature must be shown or canceled from the claim. No new matter should be entered.
2. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner,

Art Unit: 3761

the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 5 and 18 are objected to because of the following informalities: In Claim 5, "wing structure of formed" should be "wing structure are formed". In Claim 18, line 8, "partically" should be "partially". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

6. The terms "generally over the surface" and "generally the entire surface area" in Claims 1 are relative terms which render the claim indefinite. In addition, it is not clear whether the meanings of these two terms are the same or different. The terms "generally over the surface" and "generally the entire surface area" are not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. Claims 2-17 are rejected as being dependent on Claim 1.

Art Unit: 3761

7. Claim 13 recites the limitation "said regions" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

8. Claim 18 recites the limitation "said top cover" in line 6, and "said wing structure" in lines 14, 16, and 17. Claim 26 also recites the limitation "said wing structure" in line

2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in the claims. For purposes of this examination, these phrases will be interpreted as "said cover" and "said wings" respectively. Claims 19-27 are rejected as being dependent on Claim 18.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

11. Claims 1-12, 16-25, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Publication No. EP 1245209 A2 to McNeil-PPC, Inc. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,300,058 to Goulait et al.

Art Unit: 3761

12. For Claim 1, the McNeil-PPC reference shows an absorbent article for placement in the crotch region of an undergarment. The absorbent article of McNeil-PPC has a generally liquid permeable top cover and a generally liquid impermeable baffle (see backsheet 2 of Figs. 1 and 9a, col. 3, lines 45-52, col. 4, lines 28-43, and col. 6, line 53 to col. 7, line 12). An absorbent structure is disposed between the top cover and the baffle (see col. 4, lines 8-22 and col. 6, lines 53-55). A wing structure is removably attachable to a garment facing side of the absorbent article (see Figs. 1-9c, col. 3, lines 55-56, col. 5, lines 11-17 and 48-56, col. 6, lines 18-21 and 33-38). The wing structure has laterally extending flap portions having dimensions so as to at least partially encircle the crotch portion of the undergarment (see Figs. 1, 5, and 9a-9c, and col. 5, lines 43-46). McNeil-PPC discloses the garment facing side of the absorbent article providing the primary attachment between the absorbent article and the undergarment (the garment facing side of the absorbent article corresponds to the outer surface of backsheet 2 of McNeil-PPC; see Fig. 9a, col. 9, lines 21-25, and col. 10, lines 1-6). McNeil-PPC teaches the use of hook material for attachment (col. 9, lines 21-25). McNeil-PPC teaches a wing structure having a body facing side and a garment facing side. See Figs. 9a-9c and col. 9, lines 19-25. The body facing side of the wing structure corresponds to upper surface 21 of Fig. 9a of McNeil-PPC (see col. 9, lines 28-31). The garment facing side of the wing structure is lower surface 23 of Fig. 9a of McNeil-PPC. McNeil-PPC teaches that the wing structure is variably positionable on and removably attachable to the garment facing side of the absorbent article. See col. 9, lines 27-49. The phrase "variably positionable on and removably attachable to the

Art Unit: 3761

entirety of the garment facing side" is considered by the Examiner to be functional language of little patentable weight in an article of manufacture claim. To be given patentable weight, a functional recitation must be expressed as a means for performing the specified function, as set forth in 35 USC § 112, 6th paragraph. *In re Fuller*, 3 USPQ 51 (CCPA 1929), *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987), and *In re Casey*, 370 F.2d 576, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967).

13. For Claim 18, the absorbent article of McNeil-PPC has a cover, a baffle, and an absorbent structure between the cover and the baffle, as stated above in paragraph 12. The baffle is generally liquid impermeable and vapor permeable, and has a garment facing side (see col. 4, lines 28-39). A pair of wings is removably attachable to the garment facing side so as to at least partially encircle the crotch portion of the undergarment and attach to each other (see Figs. 1-9c, col. 5, lines 32-58, and col. 9, lines 3-6). The garment facing side of the baffle, the garment facing side of the wings, and the body facing side of the wings may include hook material and/or hook compatible material (col. 5, lines 11-17, and col. 9, lines 20-37). The hook material is provided such that the garment facing sides are attachable to the undergarment by way of the hook material. McNeil-PPC discloses the wing being variably positionable on and removably attachable to the garment facing side of the baffle (Figs. 9a-9c and col. 9, lines 15-38). Once the wing is attached, a pattern of fastener, which may include hook material, is presented on the garment facing sides of the baffle and the attached wings (Figs. 9a-9c and col. 9, lines 15-25).

14. For Claim 2, McNeil-PPC shows a wing structure having a unitary structure having laterally oppositely extending flap portions. See Figs. 9a-9c.
15. For Claim 3, McNeil-PPC shows a wing structure having a pair of unattached flap portions (see McNeil-PPC, Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6-8).
16. For Claim 4, McNeil-PPC shows the flap portions having a longitudinal dimension of at least about one-half of that of the absorbent article. See Fig. 2.
17. For Claim 5, McNeil-PPC discloses the baffle and the wing structure may be formed of a different material. McNeil-PPC teaches that the baffle may be formed of any thin, flexible, body fluid impermeable material (McNeil-PPC, col. 4, lines 32-39). McNeil-PPC states that the removable wings may be an extension of the backsheet, or a laminate of the cover or absorbent core and the backsheet, and that other materials may be used (col. 5, line 57, to col. 6, line 28).
18. For Claims 6 and 20, McNeil-PPC teaches that the baffle (backsheet 2 of McNeil-PPC) and the wing structure may be coated with an adhesive, and that hook and loop fastener may be substituted for the adhesive (col. 9, lines 22-25). The adhesive coating in McNeil-PPC is the same on both the baffle and the wing structure.
19. For Claims 12 and 25, McNeil-PPC discloses that the wings or wing structure may be made of nonwoven materials (see col. 6, lines 22-24).
20. For Claims 17 and 27, McNeil-PPC teaches that the absorbent article may be a sanitary napkin, panty liner, or adult incontinence article. See col. 10, lines 27-42.
21. For Claim 19, McNeil-PPC discloses the wings having generally the same shape (see McNeil-PPC, Figs. 1-9c).

Art Unit: 3761

22. Returning to Claim 1, McNeil-PPC does **not** expressly teach that hook and loop fastener is defined in a pattern extending generally over the surface of the garment facing side of the absorbent article. McNeil-PPC also does not specifically teach that the garment facing side of the wing structure (lower surface 23) includes hook material defined in a pattern extending generally over the surface. McNeil-PPC does not expressly teach that once the wing structure is attached, generally the entire surface area of the garment facing side of the absorbent article and the attached wing structure present an overall pattern of hook material for attachment to the undergarment. McNeil-PPC does not specifically state which side the hook material or the hook compatible material of the hook and loop fastener is on. For Claim 18, McNeil-PPC does not expressly place the hook material of the hook and loop fastener on the garment facing sides of the baffle and the wing structure, to allow the hook material to attach to the undergarment. For Claims 18 and 25, McNeil-PPC does not expressly disclose that the body facing side of the wings includes hook compatible material.

23. For Claim 6, McNeil-PPC does not expressly teach the pattern of hook material as being defined on the baffle. McNeil-PPC does not expressly teach the pattern of hook material on the baffle as matching the pattern of hook material on the wing structure. Similarly for Claim 20, McNeil-PPC does not explicitly teach the pattern of hook material on the baffle as matching the pattern of hook material on the wings.

24. For Claim 7, McNeil-PPC does not teach the patterns of hook material comprising longitudinally disposed stripes of the hook material. For Claim 21, McNeil-

Art Unit: 3761

PPC does not teach the patterns of hook material comprising longitudinally disposed and laterally spaced stripes of the hook material.

25. For Claim 8, McNeil-PPC does not teach the stripes of hook material having a width of about one-half of a distance between adjacent stripes. For Claim 22, McNeil-PPC does not teach the stripes of hook material having a width of about one-half of the lateral spacing between the stripes.

26. For Claims 9 and 23, McNeil-PPC does not disclose hook material in the patterns comprising between about 5% to about 75% of the total surface area of the baffle and the wing structure garment facing sides, as required by Claim 9. McNeil-PPC also does not disclose that the hook material comprises between about 5% to about 75% of the total surface area of the baffle and the wings garment facing sides, as required by Claim 23.

27. For Claim 10, McNeil-PPC does not teach that the hook material in the patterns is about 25% of the total surface area of the baffle and the wing structure garment facing sides.

28. For Claims 11 and 24, McNeil-PPC does not teach the patterns comprising discontinuous regions of the hook material.

29. For Claim 12, McNeil-PPC does not expressly teach that the body facing side of the wing structure is a hook compatible material.

30. For Claim 16, McNeil-PPC does not show the pattern of hook material on the garment facing side of the absorbent article being different from the pattern of hook material on the wing structure.

Art Unit: 3761

31. For Claims 1 and 18, Goulait teaches a pattern of hook material on the garment facing sides of the absorbent article and the wing structure for attachment to an undergarment (see Figs. 1, 2, 3, 3A, 3B, 7, 7A, and 7B).

32. For Claim 6, Goulait teaches a pattern of hook material on the baffle (see Figs. 1, 2, 3, 3A, 3B, 7, 7A, and 7B). For Claims 6 and 20, Goulait teaches the pattern of hook material on the wings or wing structure being similar to that on at least part of the baffle (see Goulait, Fig. 5, and col. 23, lines 32-44).

33. For Claim 7, Goulait discloses longitudinally disposed stripes of hook material (see Figs. 3, 3A, 3B, 7B). For Claim 21, Goulait teaches the patterns of hook material including longitudinally disposed and laterally spaced stripes of hook material.

34. For Claim 8, Goulait shows stripes of hook material having a width of about one-half of a distance between adjacent stripes (see Figs. 3 and 7B). For Claim 22, Goulait teaches the stripes having a width of about one-half of the lateral spacing between the stripes.

35. For Claims 9 and 23, Goulait discloses the absorbent article having hook material fasteners (see Goulait, col. 6, lines 35-44, and col. 7, lines 36-56). Estimating from Figs. 3, 3A, 3B, 5, 7, 7A, and 7B of Goulait, the area covered by the hook material of Goulait falls within the claimed range of about 5% to about 75% of the total area.

36. For Claim 10, Fig. 7B of Goulait shows the hook material in the patterns of about 25% of the total surface area of the baffle. Fig. 5 of Goulait shows wing structures in which about 25% of the wing structure has hook material.

Art Unit: 3761

37. For Claims 11 and 24, Goulait teaches the patterns including discontinuous regions of hook material (see Figs. 3, 3A, 3B, 7B).

38. For Claim 16, Goulait shows a pattern of hook material on at least part of the garment facing side of the absorbent article which is different from the pattern of hook material on the wing structure. See Fig. 5 of Goulait and col. 23, lines 32-44; while the overall pattern is similar, the orientation of the hooks may be different.

39. As to what McNeil-PPC/Goulait suggest for Claim 1, McNeil-PPC describes the garment facing side of the absorbent article (outer surface of backsheet 2) and the garment facing side of the wing structure as being "coated with an adhesive" for securing the absorbent article to the undergarment, and states that other fasteners such as hook and loop may be substituted for the adhesive (McNeil-PPC, col. 9, lines 22-25). The use of the term "coated" in McNeil-PPC in relation to the adhesive and other fasteners suggests that the fasteners taught in McNeil-PPC, including hook and loop fastener, extend generally over the surface of the garment facing side of the absorbent article and the wing structure. Further, the arrangement shown in McNeil-PPC Figs. 9a-9c in that the wing structure may be attached either close to one end of the absorbent article or close to the center of the article, is stated to allow for more secure attachment and more flexibility in positioning and in the type of undergarments the article will easily attach to (McNeil-PPC, col. 9, line 15 to col. 10, line 4). Goulait confirms that the use of hook material on the garment facing sides of the absorbent article and the wings for attachment to an undergarment is well known. The fastener of Goulait is described as

improving body contact with the sanitary napkin and effectiveness of the sanitary napkin (see Goulait, col. 23, lines 45-49).

40. For Claim 1, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the wing structure of McNeil-PPC to make the wing structure positionable anywhere on the garment facing side of the absorbent article, and to have generally the entire surface area of the garment facing sides of the absorbent article and the wing structure present an overall pattern of hook material for attachment to the undergarment. Doing so would enable the user to have a more secure attachment and more flexibility in positioning and attachment. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention by the applicant to position the hook material of the hook and loop fastener on the garment facing sides of the absorbent article and of the wing structure, in order to allow the hooks to fasten to the undergarment and improve effectiveness. It would also have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to position corresponding hook compatible material of the hook and loop fastener on the body facing side of the wing structure, to allow the wing structure to attach to the absorbent article where the fastener is hook and loop material.

41. For Claims 18 and 25, for the same reasons as stated above for Claim 1 in paragraph 39, it would be obvious in view of Goulait to place the hook material of the hook and loop fastener on the garment facing sides of the baffle and the wing structure, to allow the hooks to fasten to the undergarment. It would also be obvious to place corresponding hook compatible material of the hook and loop fastener on the body

Art Unit: 3761

facing side of the wing, to permit the wing to attach to the main body of the absorbent article.

42. For Claims 6 and 20, in addition to the above, Applicant's specification does not indicate that matching the patterns of hook material on the baffle and the wings or wing structure serves any stated purpose or solves any particular problem (see page 5, lines 1-4, and page 14, lines 17-23). The pattern matching is therefore considered a design choice. *In re Dailey*, 357 F.2d 669, 149 USPQ 47 (CCPA 1966). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to define the pattern of hook material on the baffle, and to use the same pattern on at least part of the baffle and the wing structure, for convenience in manufacturing and use, and to improve effectiveness.

43. For Claims 7, 8, 11, 21, 22, and 24, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention by the applicant to modify the absorbent article of McNeil-PPC to include longitudinally disposed stripes of hook material, laterally spaced stripes of hook material, stripes with a width of about one-half of a distance between adjacent stripes, stripes having a width of about one-half of the lateral spacing between the stripes, or discontinuous regions of hook material, as taught by Goulait, to improve body contact and effectiveness.

44. For Claims 9 and 23, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention by the applicant to modify the absorbent article of McNeil-PPC to include hook material covering about 5% to about 75% of the total surface of the baffle and the wings or wing structure garment facing sides, to improve body contact and effectiveness as suggested by Goulait. In addition, where there is no new and

Art Unit: 3761

unexpected result it is not inventive to discover optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation; see *In re Boesch and Slaney*, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

45. For Claim 10, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the absorbent article of McNeil-PPC to have hook material comprise about 25% of the total surface area of the baffle and the wing structure, to improve body contact and effectiveness as suggested by Goulait.

46. For Claim 12, it would be obvious for the body facing side of the wings or wing structure to be made of a hook compatible material (as stated above for Claim 1 in paragraph 39).

47. For Claim 16, it would be obvious for the pattern of hook material on at least part of the garment facing side of the absorbent article to be different in at least some respects from the pattern of hook material on the wing structure, as suggested by Goulait, to improve effectiveness.

48. Claims 13-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNeil-PPC in view of Goulait as described above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,730,069 to Tanzer et al.

49. For Claim 13, McNeil-PPC/Goulait does not expressly teach the pattern of hook material as being defined on the baffle, or the baffle and the wing structure comprising a base material with regions of hook material deposited thereon. For Claims 14 and 26, McNeil-PPC/Goulait does not teach hook material or regions of hook material being laminated to the base material. For Claim 15, McNeil-PPC/Goulait does not teach the

Art Unit: 3761

hook material being formed and laminated to the base material in a single continuous processing step.

50. For Claim 13, Tanzer teaches hook and loop fastener formed from a base material with regions of hook material deposited thereon (see Tanzer, Figs. 6 and 10, col. 6, lines 24-44, and col. 23, lines 19-31). For Claims 14 and 26, Tanzer also discloses regions of hook material being laminated to the base material (see Tanzer, col. 6, lines 24-44). For Claim 15, Tanzer teaches the hook material being formed and laminated to the base material in a single continuous processing step (see Tanzer, col. 6, lines 24-44).

51. For Claims 13-15 and 26, the hook and loop fastener of Tanzer is described as suitable for disposable absorbent articles, and as providing such benefits as a cloth-like presentation (see Tanzer, col. 1, lines 6-8 and col. 2, lines 32-40). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to define the pattern of hook material on the baffle and to have the baffle and wing structure include a base material with regions of hook material deposited on it, to provide a cloth-like presentation. It would also be obvious to laminate the hook material to the base material, and to form and laminate the hook material to the base material in a single continuous processing step, for the same reason.

Conclusion

52. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patent No. 5,087,254 to Davis et al. shows a sanitary

Art Unit: 3761

napkin which has an adjustable tab means extending laterally which fits into a pocket on the napkin's underside, and functions to wrap around the crotch of an undergarment.

U.S. Patent No. 5,669,898 to Ahr teaches absorbent articles with a flap that may be longitudinally adjusted. U.S. Patent No. 5,744,080 to Kennedy et al. teaches a laminated hook fastener. U.S. Patent No. 5,824,004 to Osborn, III et al. teaches various placements of hook and loop fastener. U.S. Patent No. 5,778,457 to Conway shows hook material attaching an absorbent article to the crotch of a panty. U.S. Patent No. 6,136,405 to Young et al. teaches a process for forming a sheet material having a fibrous surface. U.S. Patent No. 6,277,105 to Rynish teaches stain resistant strips which may be used with a sanitary napkin to protect under-garments from staining. U.S. Patent No. 6,484,371 to Romanko et al. and PCT Application Publication No. WO 99/18022 show mechanical fasteners. U.S. Patent No. 6,524,290 to Motta et al. discloses an absorbent article having removable wings. U.S. Patent No. 6,582,411 to Carstens et al. shows a sanitary napkin with projections on the garment-facing surface to attach to a garment. PCT Application Publication No. WO 01/72254 to The Procter and Gamble Company shows an absorbent article with flaps that wrap around an undergarment and attach to each other. PCT Application Publication Nos. WO 00/37002 to The Procter and Gamble Company and WO01/67911 A2 to Velcro Industries B.V show stripes of mechanical fastener. PCT Application Publication No. WO 95/07677 shows a hook compatible nonwoven material. European Application Publication No. EP 0752239 A1 shows an expandable fixing tape that may be folded into a U shape.

Art Unit: 3761

53. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paula L. Craig whose telephone number is (571)272-5964. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM-5:00PM M-F.

54. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tatyana Zalukaeva, can be reached on (571)272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

55. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

56. you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Paula L Craig
Examiner
Art Unit 3761

PLC

TATYANA ZALUKAEVA
PRIMARY EXAMINER

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Zalukaeva', written in black ink.